



CIVL President's Report to the FAI General Conference 2005

Sporting activity

As my predecessor, Mr Olivier Burghelle, reported to the Conference in the past years, the sports activities in the CIVL are ever-growing and we are confronted with increased numbers of CIVL sanctioned events worldwide. The long-established cross-country soaring Hang Gliding and Paragliding Championships were joined by Paragliding Accuracy in 2000. Next year we add Aerobatics in Hang Gliding and Paragliding following the agreement of regulations by the CIVL and the successful test competitions held recently at Villeneuve in Switzerland.

World and (Test) Continental Championships that have been organised in the past year:

- Hang Gliding class 1 World Championships in Australia
- Paragliding cross-country World Championships in Brazil
- Paragliding Accuracy World Championships in Serbia & Montenegro
- Test competition for Hang Gliding World Championships classes 2, 5 and Female (class 1) in the USA
- Test competition for Hang Gliding European Championships class 1 in Croatia
- Test competition for Paragliding European cross-country Championships in France

During these events the CIVL was represented by international juries and CIVL Stewards in the World Championships. The test competitions were attended only by CIVL Stewards, who assisted and advised the competition organisers and competitors about rule interpretation etc, and made recommendations for smooth running of the Championships to come.

In order to reduce the organisation costs, CIVL authorised the organiser of the World Championships in Hang Gliding in Australia to work with the system of a representative jury, i.e. one drawn from non-competing personnel present, rather than being appointed in advance and having to travel from other countries. This was also a test of the system for possible use in future competitions. It did not work well, because very few qualified people for a jury function were available and some of those people had to work long hours with their teams and could not find enough time to study possible protests. This inevitably prolongs the period before a protest is dealt with. In addition there were incidents of pressure and abuse of jury members by pilots from their own nation for dealing with a protest on its merits instead of in the national interest. After this failed test CIVL is not interested in using representative juries anymore.

CIVL bureau activity:

The CIVL Plenary session took place in Panajachel in Guatemala in February. During this meeting the CIVL President, Mr Olivier Burghelle, stood down from the Presidency and was unanimously elected as a President of Honour.

During the Plenary and the sessions of the different subcommittees, the major item to discuss was **safety**.

Items that will have priority in the near future of the CIVL are:

- Safety
- Communication to the Hang Gliding and Paragliding community worldwide
- Harmonizing the different scoring systems in Hang Gliding, Paragliding and the Paragliding World Cup.

The Bureau and Subcommittee Chairmen are in permanent contact via the digital highway to run the CIVL as effectively as possible.

Safety

Where it comes to safety the CIVL realises that Hang Gliding and Paragliding have a bad reputation in the FAI, because of a number of fatalities during CIVL sanctioned Continental and World Championships in the recent past. It is the opinion of the new CIVL President and the Bureau that it is unacceptable to be part of an activity that has risks that cause fatal accidents in which young people die. We must do all we can to make this stop! During the bureau meetings and the plenary meeting extra rules have been agreed and implemented to avoid situations that might cause danger to the competing pilots. The main ones are:

- Each organiser of a major competition will have to appoint a Safety Director, who will have the power to overrule the Meet Director if it concerns safety, or stop or cancel a task if weather conditions become unsafe.
- To avoid the setting of tasks in marginal weather, the Local Regulations of the competitions must publish details of limits on flyable conditions and of the tasks that can be set.
- Safety briefings by the Safety Director will be given to the pilots, all of whom will have to be present at those briefings.

Communication

Meeting and speaking with Hang Gliding and Paragliding pilots all over the world gives us the impression that there is often little or no communication between them and the people who represent them at meetings such as this one or the Plenary Meetings of our Commission. The pilots of national HG or PG teams are often not involved in the choice of the site of a next major championship (they often do not even know that there will be a possibility to choose). Many pilots, and sometimes even national Hang Gliding and Paragliding federations, do not know about FAI Sporting Licenses or the qualification criteria for competing in major competitions! They are frequently unaware of the possibility of having their National Championships sanctioned as FAI events, or the use of such events as the basis for qualifying for Category 1 competitions etc. The CIVL bureau thinks that especially in this era where everybody is communicating very easily via the Internet, it must be possible and not too difficult to reach the Hang Gliding and Paragliding community worldwide. We started working on this with enthusiasm. Since the Plenary Meeting this year we put everything that we consider that is useful for the pilots to know on the internet on the CIVL website. Thanks to the assistance of the FAI secretariat and especially Thierry Montaigneaux, we are now better able to inform the pilots about what is happening.

Scoring systems

For the major competitions that are organised under CIVL sanction, adopted scoring systems are used. Results of the competitions are sent to the CIVL to be used for updating the World Pilot Ranking System (WPRS). Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, Hang Gliding and Paragliding competitions and the Paragliding World Cup use different scoring systems and that causes lots of extra work for the people who have to put the results of the competitions in the Ranking System. This is an important job, as the WPRS is used as qualification criteria for competing in Category 1 competitions. A working group that will study the possibilities of a uniform scoring system for the different sports and disciplines has been set up. We hope that this working group will be able to produce a good and easy workable program that will save some time for the people who have to deal with the results and scores.

On Line Gliding Competition (OLC)

Many Hang Gliding and Paragliding pilots worldwide use the OLC and the CIVL wants to support the FAI in all the attempts to make the OLC more accessible to other air sports.

Badges

The performances for earning badges in the past were similar to those of the glider pilots. We realise that more realistic distances need to be used to earn badges in Hang Gliding and Paragliding, so the performances to earn a badge have been revised to suit the distances that are usually flown in our sports. A working group is devising a way to control and issue the badges.

CIVL's book: 'And the World Could Fly'

With contributions from all over the world, the CIVL produced a very nice and 'easy readable' book about the history of Hang Gliding and Paragliding called 'And the World Could Fly'. This book has been edited by Stephan Malbos (France) and Noel Whittall (UK) and is the CIVL contribution to the Centenary Celebrations of the FAI.

Concluding this report, the CIVL wishes to congratulate the FAI on its birthday and hopes that it will continue to live a long and healthy life.

We realize that the FAI cannot function without the very enthusiastic people at the headquarter in Lausanne led by Max Bishop and wish to thank Max and his staff for all the good work and support in the past year.